

## Back To Mystery City by carolinesometimes

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**Genre:** Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Billy Hargrove Being an Asshole, F/M, Implied/Referenced Abuse, M/M, Multi, Neil Hargrove's A+ Parenting, Post-Season/Series 01, Pre-Season/Series 03, Pre-Slash, Prequel, Season/Series 02, pre-Character Development

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Billy Hargrove, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Neil Hargrove, Robin Buckley, Steve Harrington, Susan Hargrove, Tommy Hagan

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**Summary:**

“Last November, this kid went missing too. Will Byers. I don’t even understand what happened—they said they found a body, pulled it out of the quarry. But he showed up about a week later, completely fine.”

Billy opened his mouth to ask more, but all of their heads snapped up as a worker called out, “ORDER FOR BUCKLEY!”

The girl pushed herself up from the seat and grinned, “see you around.”

# 1. Chapter 1

Thursday, Oct 25, 1984

31 hours. That's how long the drive from Santa Monica was to Middle Of Nowhere, Indiana; It was also about ten times how long it was going to take Max to drive Billy insane. His father had reluctantly agreed to let him drive the Camaro to Indiana (it had to get there somehow anyway). He was actually looking forward to the drive, even if he was decidedly not excited for the end destination.

That is, he *had* been looking forward to the drive. Until Susan had knocked on his window and asked him to drive Max in the Camaro too, his father standing close behind her, his arms crossed and his eyebrows furrowed. And well, who was Billy to say no to *Susan* ?

Hence, the 13-year-old redhead currently eyeing his car radio.

"Don't you fuckin' dare, Maxine!" Billy warned.

"I didn't fucking touch it!" Max protested, throwing her hands up.

"Maybe you didn't, but you were obviously thinkin' about it. And watch your damn language before you let it slip in front of Neil and I get fuckin' blamed for corrupting you!"

"You swear in front of your dad all the time! How would you know what I was thinking about anyway? Are you suddenly a mind reader?" She rolled her eyes.

"The fact that you know what I meant tells me all I need to know, dumbass."

Max grumbled something about how she wasn't actually going to touch anything while Billy thanked every god he knew for the first moment of relative silence from his step-sister since this little road trip started (spoiler: it didn't last very long).

"I just want to listen to Madonna," Max whined from the passenger

seat.

“God damnit Max,” Billy growled. “you’re lucky I’m even letting you sit in the damn passenger seat, I don’t even think you’re fuckin’ old enough.”

Max glared at him again before switching tactics, “Can you at least turn the music down?”

“No chance.” Billy reached his hand forward and turned the volume dial up, not even bothering to look over and savor Max’s annoyance; Goddamn it if he was going to let his bratty step sister interrupt Eddie Van Halen’s guitar.

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**Friday, Oct 26, 1984**

Billy blinked heavily and held back a yawn as he pulled the Camaro into a long gravel driveway, behind Neil’s black Charger (the one that Susan was always begging him to paint yellow). They had left their old house in Santa Monica for the last time at noon yesterday, which meant it was about 10:00 PM here in Indiana, and 7:00 PM back home. Billy swore quietly as he thought about what they had left behind in California. He’d grown up in that house; his *mother* had grown up there. Billy gripped the steering wheel with both hands, watching his knuckles turn white as he tried to control his breathing.

Billy’s parents had gotten hitched after his dad got his mom pregnant, when his mom was 19 and Neil was 25. They had moved into the house that his mother had grown up in, lived there together for 9 years. Raised a *child* there. And still Neil had the fucking *audacity* to sell it and move across the country because his new wife ‘*wants to live closer to her sister.*’

He looked over at the passenger seat, not surprised to see Max still

passed out. Billy didn't even know how she managed to sleep through the last seven-or-so hours on dirt roads so bumpy they had Billy running his tongue across his teeth to make sure they were all still there (which in turn resulted in him damn-near biting his tongue off, but that's not important).

"Max!" he reached his hand over to shake the girl awake. "Maxine!"

"I'm up!" Max snapped, shoving Billy's hand away.

"Get out of the car," Billy growled, waiting until she was out to speak again. "and don't think I'm carrying your shit inside for you. Tell Neil I'm going to pick up cigarettes."

"But-" Billy rolled the window up before Max could finish speaking.

Billy drummed his fingers on the steering wheel as he watched the shadow of Max's figure run up to where her step father was by the front door, both of their arms full of bags. He watched as she exchanged a few words with Neil, passing her bags on to her poor mother as she ran back to the Camaro. Billy glowered as Max knocked on the window obnoxiously loudly.

"Jesus, stop before you break my fuckin' window already," he grumbled, rolling the window down.

"I'm not going to break it." Max scoffed, pulling the passenger side door open even though she'd just made Billy roll the damn window down to talk.

"The hell you doing back in my car?"

Max glared at Billy as she pulled her seatbelt on, "He said you can go get your cigarettes as long as you pick up dinner for everyone, he doesn't want my mom to have to cook after the long car ride."

Billy raised his eyebrows at that and grumbled, "what is it, her birthday?"

Max rolled her eyes, "Apparently. You'll need help carrying all that food anyway, and I remember everyone's orders! You only know yours."

“Not fucking true! I know yours you brat, considering you drag me to spend my own fuckin’ money on you every damn day.”

Max almost looked guilty at that, she sighed. “Please, Billy?”

Billy just scoffed and pulled out of the driveway, pretending not to see the grin on Max’s face as he sped into town.

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Billy closed his eyes, inhaling his first real puff of nicotine since California. Goddamn, he needed it.

“I don’t see why you have to roll my window down too, it’s cold!” Max whined, reaching over to close her window.

“Would you rather have the wind blowing out your eardrums? Don’t bother closing your window anyway, we’re here.” *4819 Randolph Lane*. Billy slowed the Camaro and pulled into one of many empty parking spaces.

They entered the small diner, someplace called *Benny’s Burgers* , and Billy was pretty sure he’d just walked into an alternate dimension. It was so dim that he wouldn’t be surprised to learn that every light bulb was out but one, not to mention the constant flickering. The color on the once-yellow leather seats was so faded that it was hard not to notice where it looked like someone had stuck a yellow piece of paper with glue to the back of a seat and ripped it off so fast that the back was still there and- *what the fuck* . Billy frowned, was that a piece of caution tape? *What the hell happened here?*

“What’s everyone gettin’?” Billy asked, trying to push the thought to the back of his mind.

“We need two hamburgers with onions and lettuce but no tomatoes, two cheeseburgers one with pickles but no lettuce or onions, and one with everything but onions. We need a large thing of fries for everyone too.” Max started rattling off a list like the appearance of

the place didn't even bother her, "oh, drinks! We need two cokes, one diet and one regular, and two milkshakes."

Billy raised his eyebrows, "your mom approve that milkshake, Max?"

Max widened her eyes, "yes! She said it was okay because we've been on the road so long and-"

Billy rolled his eyes and ordered the food, "Go sit in a booth while we wait."

"Nice shirt." Billy turned his head as he heard a female voice from the booth behind him. "You look new in town," A tall freckled brunette snickers, "probably lonely."

"I am new," Billy smirked, noticing the girl's almost identical Fleetwood Mac shirt. "But I won't be lonely for long, give it a week-I'll be runnin' this fuckin' town."

The girl laughed lightly and motioned for Billy to scoot over. "It's good that I met you now, then. So I can say I knew you before you were famous." she paused, seeming to think about it for a minute. "Well, I guess you'll have to dethrone *King Steve* first."

"King Steve?" Billy raised his eyebrows. Motioning for the girl to keep talking.

"Ohh yeah. Also known as Steve '*the hair*' Harrington. Allllll the girls are in love with him." Billy noticed the girl's eyebrows furrow for a moment, must've gotten rejected.

Billy was having a moment of conflict. Sure, he wanted to hear more about this Steve Harrington, but goddamn he wanted to know what the fuck had happened in this diner. "I noticed that piece of caution tape, the fuck happened to involve police?" Well, Billy supposed that if *King Steve* was so popular, he'd have plenty of time to hear about him from everyone else in this damn town.

"You know how this place is called Benny's? Yeah, Benny got shot in his kitchen last November. But-" The girl opened her mouth, looking

around before she lowered her voice, “some people think it’s connected to other things that happened here. Nothing ever happens in Hawkins, so no one exactly knew what to think when things did start happening. Last November, this kid went missing too. Will Byers. I don’t even understand what happened- they said they found a body, pulled it out of the quarry. But he showed up about a week later, completely fine.”

Billy stared at her in shock. It wasn’t like these things didn’t happen in Santa Monica- but there were a lot fewer people in Hawkins, and somehow that made the whole thing seem a lot worse.

Billy opened his mouth to ask more, but all of their heads snapped up as a worker called out, “ORDER FOR BUCKLEY!”

The girl pushed herself up from the seat and grinned, “see you around.” she waved, before grabbing her order from the counter and walking out of the diner.

Max fake gagged as soon as the girl’s back was turned, “I’ll never understand, every girl who hits on you could do so much better.”

Billy frowned, had Max not even heard the conversation he just had? “First of all, Maxine, I am way out of anyone in this hick town’s league. Second of all, that girl was *not* hitting on me. I can have friends who are girls!”

Max scoffed at that, “you don’t even have friends! Ever.”

Billy’s expression darkened at that. Max wasn’t completely wrong, but it also wasn’t completely his fault. Sure, he closed himself off to almost everyone but there’s a reason, Maxine, goddamnit.

“Yeah well, Neil’s list of requirements for friends is a little long.” yeah, it was a long fucking list. *No friends who aren’t white, no bad influences, no kids with rich parents (‘cause we don’t need no one’s damn charity), no one who Neil thinks might be a fag*, - Billy could go on for days.

Before Max could answer, the same worker yelled again. “ORDER FOR HARGROVE”.

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**Sunday, Oct 29, 1984**

After two days in Hawkins Billy had bought the cheapest bottle of vodka he could find at the liquor store. He hadn't even been ID'd; Billy had a growing suspicion that the bearded man behind the counter knew he wasn't of age, and just didn't give a damn. That was one aspect of Hawkins Billy could get used to. He'd taken his vodka and driven up to the quarry, sitting too damn close to the edge for someone who was about to get wasted.

That's where Billy met the sheriff.

"Kid." Billy jumped as he heard a gruff voice behind him, feeling his heart jump out of his chest when he turned around and saw a tall figure wearing a police uniform. "I'm gonna need you to get away from the edge there."

To put it plainly; Billy didn't trust cops. His father always had a lot of rules, but one prevailed over all others. No cops. *What the fuck was a cop doing here anyway?* Two in the fucking morning; it was just his luck, like the universe was saying Billy wasn't allowed to have any fun. He'd love to tell that damn cop to stick it up his ass and fuck himself, but he thought that might end in a drive to the station and a call to his father. Billy didn't want to see what would result from that, only two days in a new town and he was already breaking the number one rule. Yeah, he'd much rather take his chances with a cop (or the rushing water below him). Billy just laughed and prayed he wasn't slurring his words when he said, "don't worry chief, I ain't gonna jump."

The officer raised his eyebrows, "no, but you might fall." Billy saw the man's eyes move to the bottle in his hands. "You're drunk. Fuck, I'm gonna castrate Vince- selling alcohol to kids." he swore.



Billy shook his head, hiding the bottle behind his back. "M'not drunk."

The sheriff pinched the bridge of his nose and sighed, "look, kid. We both know you're wasted, so why don't you just let me drive you home?"

Billy's eyes widened and he shook his head again, staggering to his feet (miraculously managing not to fall to his death in the process) and pressing the near-empty bottle into the officer's hand, "I'll sleep in my car."

The sheriff shook his head and looked at Billy like he wanted to say something else, but he let it go. "alright, kid. Don't miss school tomorrow, and don't let me catch you again."

"SHIT!" Billy slammed his hands down on the steering wheel of the Camaro as soon as he knew the chief was gone. He had really dug himself into a damn grave. There was no way he could go home now, even if he could manage to sneak back in unheard there was no way he could fucking drive. He couldn't even risk going to sleep either, he knew damn well he would sleep past the start of school, and then Susan would have to drive Max and be late for work- not exactly hard to guess who would take the fucking blame for all of it.

He put his head in his hands, trying to prepare for the next 4 and a half hours of doing absolutely fucking nothing.

*Fuck*, why had he given that damn bottle away?

## 2. Chapter 2

**Tuesday, Oct 31, 1984**

It was 1 o'clock in the morning and Billy was on cloud-fucking-nine; a feeling he hadn't thought he would ever achieve in Hawkins, Indiana. Sure, it had taken a lot of Tommy Hagan's shitty weed, and a lot of beer (beating Harrington's record at the keg stand hadn't hurt either), but at least he'd gotten there eventually.

He'd seen Harrington, dressed in a damn couples costume with Nancy Wheeler for fucks sake. Overheard him having some dumb fight with the aforementioned Nancy Wheeler; he'd had a good laugh with Carol about that one while Tommy was rolling them a joint.

"I'm telling you! Harrington was great before he got with that priss, Wheeler. D'know where Carol is, but she'll tell you." Tommy looked around absently for a minute for Carol, who'd apparently slipped out while Tommy was on one of his tirades about Harrington (Billy didn't exactly blame her), seemingly deciding it wasn't worth the effort to actually go and find his girlfriend.

Billy rolled his eyes and passed the joint back to Tommy. Not his ideal smoking buddy, but Tommy was the one supplying the weed (no matter how shitty it was), so he didn't have much of a choice.

"Hey Tommy," Billy decided he may as well try to get Tommy out of his hair- maybe he could actually enjoy this fuckin' high if his his ear wasn't being talked off about how much of a bitch Nancy Wheeler is. "Why don't you go find Carol. Gotta make sure she ain't gettin' into trouble, you know how she is when she's drunk." Hell, Billy didn't even know how she was when she was drunk- he'd known her for three days!

But apparently Tommy was too high to think of that.

"Yeah, yeah. Probably right." Tommy grumbled as he stood up from the pink carpet (Tina had insisted they smoke by the window in her

room), “See you at school, man.” he stumbled out the door, taking what was left of the joint with him.

Okay, so maybe Tina’s party was fucking lame.

Billy pushed himself up off the floor using the purple wall-papered wall, barely tripping over his feet as he exited Tina’s bedroom and made his way down the stairs (with help from the rail), nodding at the partygoers who noticed him passing through, still patting him on the back and congratulating him for the keg stand.

He patted his pockets for a moment, locating the keys to the Camaro; unlocking it before sliding into the driver's seat. He pulled out his cigarettes, lighting two at once and smoking them through to steady himself before starting the car.

Billy said a quick prayer that Max had gotten home safe and covered for him, and that there would be no sheriff at the quarry ready to ask him why he was sleeping in his car again. Then he hit the gas.

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**Wednesday, Nov 1, 1984**

The first few days at Hawkins High School had been pretty damn uneventful. The only semi-interesting things that had happened to Billy since making the 31 hour drive into Hawkins had been Tina’s Halloween party and the incident at the quarry; also known as the two events he had been intoxicated out of his damn mind for.

Max had apparently gained four stalkers, and then went fucking trick or treating with them; which- Billy had to make her swear not to mention to Neil or Susan. Max may be Neil’s little girl as of now, but his father would not be forgiving if he thought she was whoring around with a group of boys.

Billy had gone to all his classes (something he really wasn't planning on making a habit), flirted with all the girls he knew he was never actually going to date, and signed up for basketball tryouts after school tomorrow because Tommy Hagan had told him Steve Harrington was team captain.

He was curious, okay? He couldn't even have one conversation without hearing about the guy, and who knows, maybe he'd actually enjoy basketball this year.

"So, I take it King Steve's been overthrown? You're the talk of the school."

Billy turned his head as he heard a familiar voice, it took him a moment to realize it was the girl from the diner. Robin, as he'd learned in English class. She sat down on the hood of the Camaro next to him, silently pulling out her own lighter when Billy offered her one of his cigarettes.

"Of course," he spoke, probably more seriously than he should, fearing Tommy had gotten into his head. "Told you I would."

Robin rolled her eyes, breathing the smoke in, "good to know you follow through with your promises I suppose. We better hang out while we can; won't want to be seen with a band kid now that you're king, right?" she laughed. Billy got the feeling she didn't give two shits about being popular.

"School band, really? I didn't peg you as the type."

Robin hummed, "I play clarinet."

She didn't offer up anything else, and she didn't ask, so Billy didn't either. They smoked their cigarettes for another three or four minutes in silence, Robin offering Billy one last grin before she put hers out on the pavement in front of them and walked into the school, yelling at him over her shoulder not to be late.

Billy frowned at the building in front of him after she walked into it, thinking. He didn't really do friends, hell, he didn't do relationships

in general . Not that he didn't like the idea, but getting close to people had never really seemed to pay off. People always seemed to leave- or change.

This was only the second time he'd interacted with Buckley, but it seemed different. It seemed casual, but still real. Not like his friendship with Tommy Hagan (if you could even call that a friendship), who was only there because he'd been kicked to the curb by King Steve and was looking for some type of revenge.

Billy didn't trust it. He'd been burned too many damn times in his life not to immediately assume everything and everyone above tolerable was too good to be true. Tommy Hagan was simple. Billy knew his motives, he knew his damn life story, god that guy talked a lot. But that was okay, because that meant Billy didn't have to offer up anything about himself, he didn't have to get close or care .

Buckley was the opposite. She wasn't the type to fill silence just for the sake of filling it, like Tommy or his girlfriend Carol. It was like she was actually in this to make friends with a person and not a reflection of herself. It was goddamn foreign.

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Maybe Billy was being an asshole.

Okay, he was definitely being an asshole. But what was he supposed to do?

Sure, Harrington was probably already having a shit day, if what Billy had heard from Tommy about Wheeler cheating was true (and it probably was, Tommy was a pretty reliable news source for all things Steve Harrington).

But Harrington was so goddamn spoiled, his girlfriend cheating was probably the only inconvenience that he had ever experienced.

His richy-rich parents who were apparently never around (tragic), a

big empty house and a goddamn pool? Not to mention the endless inheritance.

Billy would kill for even one of those things, needless to say he wasn't exactly weeping for Steve and his perfect life.

Speaking of Steve Harrington, Billy was currently debating whether it would be weird to continue taunting him while they were 3 feet apart and naked in the locker room showers. Probably; if Hawkins High was anything like his old school in Santa Monica, the locker room would be a damn landmine for destroying your reputation in five seconds.

"That was plain sad, Harrington," Tommy snickered.

Billy thought that was pretty damn hypocritical, considering Harrington was still playing better than Tommy.

"Don't sweat it, Harrington. Today's just not your day," Billy smirked.

"Yeah, not your week. You and the princess break up for one day, and she's running off with the freak's brother."

Billy watched as Harrington showed the first sign that he had actually heard any of their words. Just a pause, but it was clear Harrington was torn up about this whole Nancy Wheeler thing. Billy almost laughed; the thought of something bad happening in King Steve's perfect little life was hilarious, really.

Tommy cackled, he had clearly noticed Harrington's reaction as well. He continued, "Oh, shit. You don't know."

Billy almost rolled his eyes at Tommy's tone but he let him speak, curious to see Harrington's reaction.

"Jonathan and the princess skipped yesterday. Still haven't shown. But that must just be a coincidence, right?"

Billy narrowed his eyes, ignoring Tommy as he left.

"Don't take it too hard, man. A pretty boy like you's got nothing to worry about. Plenty of bitches in the sea," Billy reached out and

turned Harrington's faucet off after his own, just to fuck with him, to see what he did. "Am I right?"

He watched Harrington closely, gauging his reaction. There still wasn't much- a twitch in his eyebrow, maybe a clench in his jaw.

Billy smirked as he walked out of the showers, taking the same path Tommy had a few minutes before, "I'll be sure to leave you some."

Another time Harrington's lack of a reaction would have pissed Billy off, if he was really itching for a fight, looking for someone to take his anger out on. But Billy was in a good mood; he had just become the new king, after all. Not to mention he was in good with his father since he'd signed up for basketball. Hell, he was doing fine with Susan - who was admittedly a lot more tolerable when she wasn't feeling guilty and trying to compensate for doing nothing while Neil was in one of his 'moods'.

Now, it just kind of confused him. Everyone around this school had talked up King Steve so damn much. Billy didn't expect everyone to live up to their reputations, that would be plain stupid, but he had to admit he expected more from him. There was no way the guy standing in front of them had spray painted something on a building about his slut girlfriend and then promptly gotten in a fist fight with the guy she was cheating on him with.

Either Tommy Hagan was greatly exaggerating (which wasn't out of the picture, but his girlfriend Carol had backed him up, and it didn't seem like her style), or Steve Harrington and King Steve were two entirely different people in one body. Billy really hoped it was the latter.

He was going to have a lot of fun finding out.

### 3. Chapter 3

#### Notes for the Chapter:

Bear with me and my time skips.

Also definitely wrote this last year and never posted it.

**Sunday, June 30, 1985**

Billy heard around school (*read: from Robin*) that Harrington was working at some ice cream shop in the mall these days. If it was nine months ago he might have taken Max there for an ice cream just for a chance to make fun of King Steve in his ridiculous uniform; he had a feeling that wasn't going to happen anytime soon, for more reasons than one.

He was still driving Max to and from wherever she needed to go that required a car, maybe more than before, seeing as he wasn't looking to anger Neil again anytime soon. That didn't mean things were good between them, in fact, things were awful.

Max had 'forbid' him from going anywhere near Harrington or her friends (something that Billy did because he wanted to, not because a fourteen year old told him to, thank you very much). She had this idea in her head that she could boss him around now, that he would do what she said because he was scared. And she was right. Well, almost.

Billy wasn't scared of a fucking kid. He was scared of the same monster that'd been under the bed for the greater part of seventeen years, Neil.

Max thought she was in charge now, all because of one night; the events of which Billy did his best not to think about. First of all- it was fucking embarrassing. He let his kid step-sister threaten him, and then she stole his fucking car!

Not to mention what had happened when he stumbled home a day



after Neil had told him to go find his step-sister; drugged out of his mind, with no car and some half assed, (less-than)-half-sober story about a flat tire.

What was he supposed to say to Neil, that his fourteen year old step-daughter had shot his son up with tranquilizer and stolen his car to drive her friends who knows where? Yeah, not happening.

It hadn't exactly gotten better when a week later the chief of police showed up on the Hargrove's porch and explained to his father what had really happened. Or at least the part of it that painted Billy in the worse light (naturally), told him how he was goddamn lucky Harrington wasn't going to press charges.

He hadn't felt very lucky.

So yeah, Billy was kind of on thin ice with fucking everyone right now.

Even Susan was being more of a bitch to him than usual, looking at him all disappointed like she had any fucking right to judge his character when she knows full well the type of man she married. Speak of the devil—Neil had made it pretty fucking clear that one more 'incident' like this and Billy would not be living under his roof for much longer.

Billy wasn't sure whether that meant he'd be in the streets or six feet under, but he wasn't itching to find out.

There was almost exactly one month until Billy turned eighteen—*shit*.

His plan had always been to book it and get out of Hawkins as soon as he could. That was still the plan, of course; but it wasn't exactly an option to pack up and leave with a whole year of school left.

"Hargrove!" Billy blinked and turned to look at the brown haired girl who was snapping her fingers painfully close to his ear, "Jesus, it's like you're already high, and I haven't even brought out the weed yet."

Billy pushed her hand away and groaned, “*please* tell me you didn’t get that weed from Tommy Hagan.”

Robin looked offended, “you think I don’t know where to get the good shit?” she leaned back into the lawn chair she was sitting on. “Seriously, what’s got you so deep in thought?”

“My birthday’s in a month.”

“I know!” Robin grinned, putting out her cigarette on the ashtray in front of them, “what do you want for your birthday, Billy?”

“To be back in Santa Monica.”

“Well, why don’t you go? You’re turning eighteen! Who’s stopping you?”

“I don’t know, I think I’d feel kind of bad leaving you here alone for senior year, I’m kind of your only friend,” Billy looked at her and smirked.

“I’m only using you so I can sit with the cool kids at lunch, don’t get a big head,” Robin grinned at him. She spoke again after a minute, “I’d understand, Hargrove, really. No hurt feelings at all. I mean sure I’d miss you, but I’d do it too—if I thought I could.”

Billy knew she meant it, that there really wouldn’t be any hurt feelings. And *God*, he wanted to take that opportunity to leave more than anything. But he couldn’t.

It seemed cruel, really, that he was turning eighteen almost an entire year before he could actually leave Hawkins; seemed the universe was dangling his freedom in front of him like a carrot on a stick.

“I know you would,” Billy finally said, “but I can’t leave until I graduate.”

Billy’s mom had made him promise to finish school, made him swear it. He’d never understood why it was such a big deal to her, until he woke up one morning a year later and she was gone.

Billy was nine when his mom left, and twelve when he realized that

she'd been planning on leaving him there alone for an entire year before she did it. He'd never been so angry in his life.

Although, Neil telling him to say his goodbyes to Santa Monica a month before they were moving and three after they'd bought a house in Hawkins had been a strong contender.

"What do you want second?"

Billy snorted, "I don't know, my family isn't exactly big on gifts. Or remembering birthdays, actually."

Robin rolled her eyes, "well I am, and I've got all this money from my job to just throw around."

Billy shook his head, they both knew that wasn't true. "Okay, okay, get me Crüe's new record. Since you have all that money to throw around."

Robin groaned, "That album is shit and you know it!"

"I thought you liked them!"

"I do!" Robin protested, "I like *Too Fast For Love*, and *Shout At The Devil*," she counted on her fingers, "and Vince Neil's hair."

Billy raised his eyebrows, "nice list."

"Thank you," Robin grinned again. She was silent for a minute, looking thoughtful, Billy raised his eyebrows.

She finally said, "I think you should apologize to Harrington."

Billy scoffed, "it's been nine months, I'm pretty sure Harrington's had time to get over it."

"I'm just saying- you want to get away from your dad, right? That's why you want to go back to California, but you can't. Isn't the next best thing to be a better fucking person than him?"

If it was anyone else, really, Billy would have broken their damn nose.

But it was Robin, so he just picked up his jacket and left.

**Notes for the Chapter:**

I have a little more written tbh I could continue this.

I am working on something long as shit rn but yes I could continue this if y'all want it.